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THOMAS BLACKBURN

Ulysses

IF love was absent and great sleeps of sea
Against his longing for the island queen,
The talk of water and the haunted grass
Was all Penelope. Each night between
His body and the daughter of the god
Fumed in sour mist the one who was not there.
He struggled up the passage of his blood
And pitched to blackness from the final stare.

When at the last, his salt and twisted prow
Beaching on Ithaca, the dream came round
And put on flesh within a marriage bed,
Was that which he was seeking lost or found?
Of course each burning syllable was shed
From the calm platitude of middle-age
That opened like a book he'd often read;
But turning from her to the open sea—
Did he across the water of our cause
Drive home into the passion of his mind,
Or force between salt currents and gross valves
To seize mere metaphor, head down and blind?

Winning entry in the OUTPOSTS Short Poem Competition

PAUL DEHN

Siren's Song

I

IT comes from below the horizon; and may be heard
On palmy days by sailors with cocked ear-rings
In the sea-heat of a summer without end:
Note after white note mounting on the skyline
Like a ladder of birds,
Till the entire chord
Towers overhead. And hearing
Voices but no words,
The landless see the land.

From grottos under coral towers
The foam erupts in fumaroles
And, drifting sideways in the wind,
Thins to a rainbow-spray and falls,
About the yellow cliff, in flowers.

Look, now! The rocks, from teeth on the horizon,
Loom tall as bergs; and though the blue-beaked lory,
Strutting the cabin-top, stops, blinks and recalls
Deep in the hinterland among the tendrils
The hot scream of a mate
Greener than poison,
The sailors feel only the glory
Of sound, and sand, and light
Whose dazzlement conceals

What jackals whining, each to each?
What vultures glaring, side by side,
At lemon-coloured jingle-shells
That lie in windrows on the beach
And tinkle with the laden tide?

Sooner or later, at the pull of the pale
Midday moon, these rocking shells will ring
One swimmer to the shore. Sooner or later
The fish will scatter, as the fingering wind
Strums on the shallows
In pursuit of all
These sounds, hither and thither winging,
That weave, now, like swallows
Across the waiting water.

Cry of whom, and call of what
(Uttered how, and echoed where?)
Whistle, flutter, wheel and chitter
Endlessly between the hot,
Hazy sea and heady air.

II

Butés, the son of Pandion, fairest of all
Mortal men, browner than sand or satin,
Halts on the Argo's prow with the salt spray stinging
His blue-spar eyes; hears the tumescent throb
(In its rib-shuttered room)
Of his heart's bacchanal,
And dives from the deck, brighter than beaten
Gold in the drifting spume
Towards the singing.

The jackals stiffen in their tracks,
The vultures freeze upon the tree.
The flesh is young, the day is long.
Something unearthly on the rocks
Yawns, and smiles, and slithers free.

The din of the deep water in his ear
Thins to a whisper; and the white sand, rearing
Steeply from the sea-bed, like a lover arches
Its ribs against his own.

Far, far astern
Falls the releasing silence.
Men at the masthead peer
Homeward. Only dead-still and staring
Back to the vanished islands
The tethered lory perches.

Take away the iron chain
And on a green wing he would move
Shrieking, to a lost day
When beak and claw were bright again
And the groves were loud with love.

III

Sooner or later those who have nothing to lose
But their own beauty, arrive at the desolate point
Of no return. They can only move forward,
The receding sun faint on a yellow shoulder
And the advancing night
Cold in their eyes.
After perfection, the descent.
After the sound of sand and light,
The dark drift shoreward,

Where fear ascribes the whitened bone
To non-existent goat and gull;
And what, for the evasive eye,
Was sea-wrack covering a stone
Is wet hair on a man's skull.

So Hylas on Argo, once, in the halcyon weather,
Nearing his beauty's noon, awoke to the same
Soft, urgent voices calling from the land
As no-one might ever, in a later spring,
Have called to him again.
He went (he said) for water;
And the gulls still cry his name
Who ran beside the blue Aegean
To meet his boyhood's end.

Some believe that as he leaned
Panting by the pool alone,
Tendril-fingers drew him down.
But was the white and shuttling hand
Nymph's or naiad's, or his own?

And who calls Butés, now, on the rocky height
Where huge as Atlas, seismic with desire,
Rutting into space over the rim of chaos
Past bawling planets and the deranged stars,
He couples with the void;
Till the unhallowed light
Haloes with everlasting fire
The shrivelled thing that spills its blood
From no compassionate Cross.

The jackal and the vulture come
To feed upon his bones in peace
And daintier teeth devour the heart,
While the Heroes carry home,
Immortally, the Golden Fleece.

RUTH FAINLIGHT

The Past

LIKE isolate worlds, touching at one point only,
We try to hide in our hearts the truth we know:
All of our past lives heavy in this embrace.
We are the child we always are, all we have learnt.

That whirl of inexpressive thoughts can never meet.
At the very moment of truth we lie, the sly deceivers
Who have lain with others. The weight of the past
Crushing the chance of the present moment, keeps us apart.
We fly with a frightened glance, although,
Limbs laced together, we could never be more close.

Spain.

JOHN HEATH-STUBBS

The Sphinx

IT is not feminine: this crouching cat-beast
Kneading a vacant temple between its claws—
Napoleon and the rest
Can fire their guns in its face. In the vicinity
Of the pyramidical Pyramids, where the lanner
Nested, and boys can easily scale,
For a few piastres, an old cove's tombstone,
It will stay, it will gaze
At the rising, rising sun, until the sun
Forgets to rise, and Time ruins, and it, too,
Crumbles—the implacable image
Of male power that smoothly worships itself.

Egypt.

STANLEY SNAITH

The Cornfield

DRESSED in their level ranks
The shocks stride in the stubble,
Each brandishing from the west
Its umbrian double:
A golden militia hailing
The sun that royally sinks.

All is so calm: the field,
Lapped in its valedictory rose,
Breathes its own high noon
Of certainty and repose:
The sowing vindicated,
The promises fulfilled.

This hour includes me too:
The glory-trailing Might-Have-Beens
Are mysteriously reconciled
With the dusty lies and sins,
And Blessedness becomes
The pure, the authentic law.

Living, I share with the dead
This grave and sacrificial feast;
I am nourished by what my flesh
Itself must nourish, the harvest
Wrung from the obdurate bosom:
The wine, the bread.

FELIX ANSELM

You'll Never Be Asked

YOU'LL never be asked (if
you're asked at all, when
the dread day comes) whether
you were a sinner or a saint or how much
of either. If
you're asked at all, it will be how
many days of your days you've lived
and how hot your passion had been for
whatever; how deeply the drill of your thoughts overtook
the bore of the worm and how many
of the riddled waves of the void
the aerial of your soul had received. . . . Never
will you be asked whether
you passed your examinations: only whether
you took them.

U.S.A.

ROBIN SKELTON

At Tutankhamun's Tomb, Thinking of Yeats

I ENTER the tomb and remember
his chanted, laden words.
On fresco and papyrus gods
have the hooked heads of birds.
The flared dark echoes. The still golden
smile haunts and disturbs.

Artifice of a dead thing
mocks the hands that made,
the bestial tunnelling
into the mountain side,
and the inscribing eye
mastering lacquer and jade.

Broken complexities
of the meshed nerve and vein
build coloured hieroglyphs
on wood and stone.
Done mire and fury phrase
peace on long bed and crown.

All that man is in his time
of laboured passion and need
is to accompany the journey
of the painted dead
whose toys and kingdoms rest,
is to guard the smiling head

skinned in gold. I remember
his senatorial voice
echoing the maker's need
of a ghost's objective grace.
He built a golden bird
out of his raggedness,

and heard its clock-work sing
to emperor and queen
on hades' bough, of past
and passing and to come.
He had his thought worked out
and imaged on his tomb.

The single eye of Ra
looks cold upon his grave.
Horseman and hawk, the sun
swings by the bones that strove,
huddled in dirt, or huddled
in their painted clothes.

Yet the long Pharaoh looks
with epicurean eyes,
firm in surfeit, content,
with life's epiphanies
gathered at head and foot
under the stones, mock skies,

and I am kneeling down
in centuries and dirt
before a bandaged death;
the withered lung and heart
praising still, the small skull
still catafalqued in art.

Such sinews thonged and dried
rig every argonaut,
hang every fanatic oath,
and rock all bells' tongued weight;
umbilicus and cord
rope sands to keep us caught,

and that gilt smile the dark
conceals as torches burn
out in lifted hands
retains its living form,
and passionate and gay
its stillness will return

through time to what we made
when centuries beaten flat
above our journeying dead
are broken into dirt
and years fall down like stones
before the reaching heart,

and, chronicled with lives
burned out to give us bread,
bound by the nerve and vein,
we lie untenanted
below the desert's waste
and know that we are dead.

For then that smile shines out,
as gods with heads of birds
and stick legged scribes pretend
dead empery disturbs,
ghost journeying on in state.
His laden, wrought out words

leave as I leave the tomb,
this history ill begun
that must end in the dark
and passionate painted room
someone disturbs, disturbed, behind
his back the bird-beaked sun.

RUTH FORBES SHERRY

Valences: A Poem for the Geophysical Year

FOR who shall decode his time;
Who, casting a beam spaceward,
casting a beam to the sea floor,
shall read the year?

Give him rockets to assault Mars,
sky-cavalry to hurl megathons.
Give him the spectrum to cipher planets,
the atom to uncover firstness,
to read beginnings.

Quantum he shall plot, and leap of proton.
He shall understand values, valences.
Let him feed data to Univac—
data of the soul's equation.

He knows courage and violence
but not their measure.
Love he courts but cannot consummate.

He cries: *Here the engine; here the proverb;*
here the lovely figure of our dream.

The sun throbs in his hand.
Stars are not stranger to him,
and gossip wind awakens longing.

But he cannot read the year
nor decode the century.

U.S.A.

PETER LITTLE

In the Park

THE dark dogs of spring worry the morning;
Their mouths, to the walking lovers panting their warning,
Are red bells of light, baying and burning.

In the children's playground, the safe toys are turning
To a slow march, to a muffled drum-beat swinging,
The dying young to their moving worlds gaily clinging.

We shall destroy you, says their peacock screaming,
To the walking lovers, deaf in their dreaming.
Love has fewer springs than my flowering,
Says the almond, its pink confetti showering.

The wise lovers do not heed their true warning;
The wise lovers kiss, and are grateful for morning.

MICHAEL BULLOCK

Figure in a Landscape

HE comes with a flower in either hand,
unconscious of his dignity,
walking through knee-deep grass.

We see him pass
and all our cold rigidity
trickles away from us like sand.

He moves from sea to land,
from the immensity
of water to the narrow pass

between two hills. At last
our incredulity
is broken and we stand

in awe and wonder
as his footfalls ring
from earth to sky, inverted thunder.

Rocks burst asunder,
trees sing,
and from deep under

the earth there towers
a tall stem of song,
the Word its flower.

EDWARD STOREY

Poem for an Artist

(for John)

One leaf
dead as anything can be
yet, from its deathless colour, I
can see you giving back
its second life, its other sky,
either with brush, or knife, to make
one summer live winter would rather die.

One night
gone now as any dark night goes
but permanent for me because
from something dead you brought
another spring, a song in flood,
and suddenly all truth was out
not that we knew nor that we understood.

LOUIS JOHNSON

Cassandra
(for my daughter)

TO be cursed with speaking truth
but not to be believed
is the mutual fate of poet and prophetess;
for a God has spat in their mouths
believing himself deceived
by those who serve the most ubiquitous Goddess.

So I have named my child
Cassandra for that one
who told that Troy must fall
which could not be conceived
by those behind the stone
of what they thought the most impregnable wall.

I ask that she may see
there is no safety in
silence or mere acceptance:
anything that might be,
from passion, to mirth, to pain,
is in the pattern of the completed dance.

Then let her tongue be rich
to speak of what she must,
let heart and mind be clear
that she not ask too much
of earth, for being of dust
we are not Gods, but ashes in the air

having burned a little while
with glazed or steady flame,
lighting the utmost wall
knowing the heart will fail
but doing it just the same
though all the topless towers of Ilium fall.

New Zealand

ROBERT GITTINGS

Sheep

UNDER a driftwool sky
Sheep, moving on the downs,
Show in the moon's white eye
The circus-face of clowns.

As we step up to pass,
Each bare quick-cropping head
Raises prompt from the grass
Black lips in place of red.

They wheel, scattered away,
Self-scared with mocking cries,
Sad foolishness astray
In laughter's grim disguise.

KAREN GERSHON

Every Memory

THE scar within the tree
perpetuates the drought;
every memory
is a brooding shout.

The comfort of a leaf
can afforest a hill;
a conflict of grief
can destroy the will.

The fire at the core
reduces stars to stone.
The hunter must ignore
the bugle in the bone.

P. J. HELM

Practical Botany

HIERATIC,
Or with the slow deft gestures
Of an acolyte,
Caught in a poise
The adolescents work.

Not dedicated
(Given to God),
Nor pledged to the salvation
Of a secular body,
But trained in a discipline—
The ordered accurate
Assault on small
Vegetable problems.

Microscopic gymnasts.
Gamesmen of the scalpel and the section,
Moving—quite silent and at least partly
Absorbed—from stem to stain;
Climbing the Nursery slope,
Here the hold, small but secure,
Of something identified,
And there a possible grip,
A rational deduction . . .

Time chimes: "Go, it is finished."
For a little they still carry through
The undisciplined tumble of the school
The faint incense of an exact
Technique.

REVIEWS

Words for the Wind: Theodore Roethke (Secker & Warburg, 15s.).
A Winter Talent: Donald Davie (Routledge, 10s. 6d.).
Poems: Anthony Cronin (Cresset Press, 9s. 6d.).

THE more innocent a poet, the more will he think anthropomorphically: the more will he endow the inanimate with living qualities. Thus Theodore Roethke, "I have known the *inexorable sadness of pencils*"; or Anthony Cronin, "We are what we want when we love *though the wallpaper hates us*". This way of thinking, at once more primitive, more magical, or if you like, more childlike, is all the more incongruous in a scientific age where the very opposite thought processes prevail, where in fact, through automation, the animate is replaced by the machine. For those still able to think occasionally in non-logical terms these three books can be commended.

The anthropomorphic imagination is particularly well exemplified in *Words for the Wind.* Mr. Roethke's gift is so purely lyrical that when he is at his best commentary is superfluous. His thinking is the antithesis of logical prose thought and he hardly needs to exclaim: "O to be delivered from the rational into the realm of pure song".

> "What moves in grass I love—
> The dead will not lie still,
> And things throw light on things,
> And all the stones have wings."

It is the vision of the child and, in such a childlike world as in that of Walter de la Mare, there is not only nascent wonder but shadows and terror:

> "What rustles in the fern?
> I feel my flesh divide.
> Things lost in sleep return
> As if out of my side. . . ."

Alas, too many of the poems, especially those which are more discursive, are nonsensical in a poetic as well as prose sense. Bad nursery rhymes, tedious word spinning, abstract whimsy, make the reader despair of this 'hit or miss' American poet. But his later poems, particularly, with their singular rhythm, short lines, marvellous compression and intensity, deserve to be known by anybody who cares for poetry in England.

Mr. Davie's poetry, because of its *knowingness,* is altogether more sophisticated; but though the reader may admire his technical skill, and may find a number of his lines memorable, *A Winter Talent* is hardly likeable. His coldness of diction is, of course, deliberate and is part of his critical knowingness. Reacting against the too self-indulgent style of a decade ago, when diction went wild and every line was played as an ace and most poems as a whole went bankrupt, Mr. Davie is too careful (almost mean) with language :

> "In which the rule is not to show one's hand
> Until compelled. . . ."

Various negative, though related, attitudes inform those poems of his which are characteristic : fear of showing one's hand, fear of vulgarity, fear of familiarity ("You grow too warm. I must be moving on"), fear of any display of emotion ("How dare we now be anything but numb?"). Then again there are times when Mr. Davie sounds too much like a lecturer of Eng. Lit. writing occasional verses. Sometimes artefacts of erudition obscure rather than enhance the general flow of a poem; but if the reader is prepared for a plain diction, for abundant references to names of painters, poets, and philosophers; if he is willing to concede that there is a place for the fanciful mind as well as the imaginative, he will agree that *A Winter Talent* is a real, if limited, achievement.

Mr. Cronin's poems have a quality that can best be described as 'charm'. He sees other people, however ordinary, as fundamentally odd, and also tragical in that they cannot communicate with each other. His language, deceptively flat, aims at precision and statement.

> "In suffering we call out for another,
> Describing with a desperate precision.
> We must be sure that this is how all suffer
> Or be alone forever with the pain.
> And all our search for words is one assertion :
> 'You would forgive me if I could explain'."

Wrongly, Mr. Cronin's poetry has been compared with that of 'The Movement' (with whom Donald Davie has been associated). Wrongly because Mr. Cronin's themes are traditionally romantic : the loneliness of individuals; the indifference of dehumanised organisations; the courage lonely man must foster, etc. And charming because he introduces concrete and real images to illustrate such themes; because his cadences are pleasing and because his tone is

compassionate and colloquial. Yet these colloquialisms with their idiosyncratic syntax and punctuation may puzzle some unaccustomed to the conversational Irish idiom. Occasionally the flat statements with which he concludes his poems are banal: "And the frown of the strong was as false as the smile of the weak" or "Life would begin the following day". Fortunately these banalities are infrequent. Indeed, on the whole, Mr. Cronin's *Poems* are unusually percipient and illuminate as they comment with economy on experience that is contemporary and universal.

DANNIE ABSE

Poetic Heritage, compiled by John Press (Andre Deutsch, 10s. 6d.).
The Coast of Barbary: Audrey Beecham (Hamish Hamilton, 12s. 6d.).
Act One: Randolph Stow (Macdonald, 10s. 6d.).
Winter's Right: Elena Fearn (Hand & Flower Press, 8s. 6d.).
Beyond Words: Eric Knight (Linden Press, 7s. 6d.).

POETIC HERITAGE is a compilation in book form of a series of poems from the beginning of the sixteenth century to the present day. The poems originally appeared as a series in the *Sunday Times.* If this were the end of the matter, Mr. Press would earn our admiration for the manner in which he has sifted over four hundred years of English poetry and managed again and again to represent familiar names by unfamiliar and, at first sight, uncharacteristic material. He has sought for sinewy, colloquial verse, eschewing the poetic, and it is with relief that we find, for example, Hopkins as the writer of the devotional sonnets—surely the high-water mark of his work—rather than as the inevitable impressionist of natural history. It is, however, as a representative anthology that the book fails. From this aspect, it is difficult to see how T. S. Eliot can be dismissed by a thirteen-line extract from the *Preludes* and Milton by a similarly inadequate portion of *Paradise Lost.*

Perhaps the most surprising thing about Miss Beecham's collection is the fact that it is her first. Immediately, in the first poem, one is struck by a freshness of imagery which can produce such lines as: "The landscape against which the tree was felled / is still just wrinkled where its shadows were". Occasionally she will attempt a poem in the grand manner and may then become guilty of a certain

romantic 'purpleness', but when she is entirely herself she is fresh and invigorating. Her two sonnet sequences are almost flawless, and it is difficult to quote from one rather than another. In this short review I have space only for the octet from one of her *Sonnets on The Theme of Love:*

> "When lovers reach from their discordant poles
> The earth balks up to separate their hearts.
> From such remote and bleakly distant parts
> Their arms embrace, that where an ocean rolls
> Its spray imbrues their skin with glittering shoals
> And when a mountain from its sea-bed starts
> The flesh is bruised with chain and where there darts
> Volcanic utterance are their eyes red coals."

Let me say at once that the young Australian Randolph Stow, whose book *Act One* is a Poetry Book Society recommend, is not my kind of poet. But let me add that his verse is, for the most part, deft and assured. It is, in fact, reportage at a high level of achievement. He stands outside his themes and tells us that lust is ". . . the flesh-warm galleries / Of love's climactic vortex . . ."; that love is ". . . a girl as slim as a willow / Walking beside . . ." who has "let no touch / Unhallow" and that "The flesh when seen in the flesh appals."

Perhaps it is this experience of being appalled that prevents Mr. Stow from being involved in his world. Whatever the reason, he is never lost in his poetry—and neither are we.

If Mr. Stow suffers from an over-disciplined objectivity, Miss Elena Fearn squats at the other end of the pole. Too often in her work image is piled upon image with little aesthetic or intellectual effect. Some of the poems in *Winter's Right* do, however, reveal that Miss Fearn is capable of a more disciplined vision, and in such as *The Sailor's Tale* and *Beware That Angel* she draws a single image with considerable charm and sensitivity.

Mr. Knight's themes in *Beyond Words*, deriving as they do from a daily awareness of the Gospel figures, are beyond reproach, but it is a sad fact that irreproachable themes do not necessarily make for irreproachable poetry. Finally, the impact of the poetry depends upon the punching-power of every line upon the page and too many of Mr. Knight's blows are featherweight.

EDWIN BROCK

The Red Leaf: Christopher Hassall (O.U.P. 15s.).

IF the first thing that strikes one about *The Red Leaf* is its extraordinary range of subject, the next is the accomplished manner in which the author, Mr. Christopher Hassall, makes every poem of real interest to the reader, as though he had discovered the knack of bringing to light some previously hidden significance in even the slightest of themes. Yet in only a few of these poems does he attempt to penetrate very far below the surface of his material. Nevertheless, there is not a dull or incompetent poem in the whole collection. Analysis shows that this is due, not to any inherent quality in the material he uses—indeed, some of it appears at first glance to be most unpromising—but to his personal response to experience and, more particularly, to his individual method of communication.

In *Cabbage White,* a poem in which he describes a host of white butterflies descending and settling to lay their eggs, he almost lets us into the secret:

"A *white* butterfly should be the nonpareil of beauty.
Say it, but keep it single—'a white butterfly'.
It might well be a part of some transcendent poetic image,
A symbol for the stainless journeying soul.

Then why does the mind revolt?
These tens of thousands amount to something hostile.
They have suddenly become abominable,
A symbol of commonness,
A plague.
Too much of anything is shocking,
Not only insects,
No, but syllables and similes
Which must be sparely used
Or be dragged plumb down into deadly dullness
By their own weight of superfluous white wings."

Mr. Hassall's "syllables and similes" are never permitted to be dragged down by their own weight, and there certainly is never "too much of anything". He adopts a deceptively easy flow of language, with asides and parentheses, snatches of insight, shrewd reflections, give-away lines that lose nothing in the giving, dry humour and pleasant self-raillery—a conversational idiom, in fact, which establishes an intimate (though not too intimate) and friendly relationship with the reader, so that no formal introduction is

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needed. Many of his best poems start with a casual line which somehow compels attention—

"I wish they hadn't carried away her brass bedstead.
And yet, what would one do with a brass bedstead,
even hers?"

(*Point of Departure*)

"Excuse me, but are you that Hole in the pavement at Austin Friars?"

(*The Hole and the Summons*)

"Most of this image is an evening sky immense and empty"

(*Prayer for my Son*)

and one is usually rewarded, though his method has its dangers and it might justifiably be said that some of his poems lack intensity. Mr. Hassall takes history, mythology, music, drama literature, people and places in his poetic stride and, once having set out, is seldom at a loss for a valid line of thought or a subtle observation on the way. His poems have a direct bearing upon life—the life of a sensitive intelligent person whose mind is open to the vagaries, the inconsistencies and the riches of experience.

HOWARD SERGEANT

The Succession: Quentin Stevenson (O.U.P. 10s. 6d.).
Heart of Grace: Patrick Galvin (Linden Press, 7s. 6d.).
Poems of Truth: Michael Dillon (Linden Press, 6s. 6d.).
Whose Gold Unminted: Noel Morton (Neville Spearman, 10s. 6d.).

QUENTIN STEVENSON is an interesting new poet. I hope that he can develop his technique sufficiently to appreciate the different effects achieved by true half-rhyme and mere dissonance. His use of dissonance is extremely arbitrary, and sometimes deadens his rhythm where it most needs impetus. The frequency with which he perpetrates slurred rhymes leads one to suspect that an attitude of brutal sophistication is being attempted, yet Stevenson seems too sensible to shelter behind such a policy. There are, besides, compensating occasions where he employs assonance correctly: *i.e.*, without lousing up a stress by a clash in consonantal texture. Stevenson must examine his conscience regarding his methods of construction. The most loosely constructed poem in this collection,

The Convent Chapel, is a modest success. Too many of the others fail through pre-occupation with an academic self-consciousness, and not enough attention to relative sound values in the words used. This is very strange when the man seems sensitive in so many other ways.

Patrick Galvin's poems give a strong impression of spontaneity at first reading, as though the words had been sung straight on to the page. His crudity of construction, violent content, and patent Irishisms might irritate a casual reader into deciding that there is more blarney than durability about these poems. Melodious curses then, upon the casual reader! Galvin is a careless writer: but he can afford to be. He deals with themes of human conflict in an uncompromising manner. Love, rebellion, martyrdom, and other aspects of human folly concern him most, and when irony tempers the Irishness he can be very good. He is so caught up in Irish history that one wonders when his London environment is going to be given its head. These poems are vigorous, sardonic, whimsical, amusing, and sometimes all of these at once. Galvin's talent may have to sit out two or three more fashions in verse, but they will finally be recognised.

I have no wish to belittle what seems to me an earnest attempt to propound a philosophy in both prose and verse sections. But Dillon uses archaic diction even in his prose, which wavers between the intonations of the pulpit and the quack doctor. He tries hard, and occasionally makes a point neatly in verse. However, the philosophy, like the verse, is strictly at nursery level.

Noel Morton does not comprehend that he cannot load verse with outmoded affectations of poetic diction without sacrificing any personal vision in the process. He has overworked every stop in the Poetaster's Grand Organ, to produce a monotone of garbled echoes.

W. PRICE TURNER

NOTICES

BALKEMA of Cape Town, South Africa, wish to announce the publication of *A Critical Survey of South African Poetry In English* by G. M. Miller and Howard Sergeant, at 21s. Readers can obtain copies direct from our British agents, Hatchards of Piccadilly, London.

This volume deals with the problems which all comparatively new societies (such as those of Australia, Canada, South Africa and the United States) have had to face in developing a national culture. It traces the development of South African poetry from its earliest beginnings, and examines the work of all South African poets and their place in the growing tradition, against the racial, social, economic and political background. In addition to full length studies of the life and poetry of Thomas Pringle, Arthur Shearly Cripps, Kingsley Fairbridge, Francis Carey Slater and Roy Campbell, it includes a consideration of the work of such South African migrants as William Plomer, F. T. Prince, David Wright, R. N. Currey, Roy MacNab and Peter Abrahams. This is the first time that such a task has been attempted. If you are unable to purchase a copy, make a request for it at your local Public Library.

OUTPOSTS SERIES OF BOOKLETS. Two of the recent additions to this series, *A Forecast, A Fable* by Ruth Fainlight and *The Forsaken House* by Doris Major, are first collections; and although Ruth Forbes Sherry, author of *Imperishable Gene,* has been widely published in the U.S.A. her work is little known in this country.

COPIES of *The Headlands,* poems by Howard Sergeant, are still available at 7s. 6d. from Putnam & Co. Ltd.—"Those who despair of the aims and values of modern poetry should ponder Mr. Sergeant and think again." (*Contemporary Review*).

POEMS INVITED. A national magazine experimenting with the publication of poetry for the first time has given the Editor of *Outposts* the task of selecting suitable material. Payment is exceptionally good. Poems of not more than 20 lines, and having a direct impact upon the reader, should be sent (together with a stamped addressed envelope) to the *Outposts'* address.